

**TESTIMONY OF  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS  
BY  
ANDY MARKOWSKI, CONNECTICUT STATE DIRECTOR  
SUPPORTING  
HB-6127, AAC UTILITY DEPOSITS FOR BUSINESS CUSTOMERS  
BEFORE THE  
ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE  
March 12, 2009**

*The National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business advocacy association, respectfully submits the following comments supporting the aforementioned bill:*

In the 2008 edition of "*Small Business Problems & Priorities*" by the NFIB Research Foundation, two energy-related topics ranked in the top 10 problems faced by all small business owners. "Energy Costs, Except Electricity" ranked as the 2nd greatest problem of concern from small business owners, up from its 4<sup>th</sup> position in 2004. This problem is deemed as "critical" by 43 percent of small business owners. "Electricity Costs (Rates)" ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in 2008, up from 10<sup>th</sup> in 2004 and 19<sup>th</sup> in 2000.

Generally, small business owners use energy for a number of purposes essential to their business, including heating and/or cooling and operating equipment. Rising electricity costs in particular have great consequences for small businesses.

Start-ups and new businesses, however, are particularly vulnerable to not only the high cost of energy, but also the fluctuating rates. Recent surges in energy costs, combined with the current credit crunch, form a barrier that many businesses cannot afford. Entrepreneurs, who are already risking their own capital in trying to get a business off the ground, are often faced with restricted cash flow and view large security deposits for utilities as one more impediment to their success.

NFIB therefore urges you to support HB-6127, which will go a long way to help entrepreneurs get their businesses off the ground and overcome one of the many economic challenges they are facing. Thank you.